

**Administrative
Policy and
Procedure
Policy**

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
AMBULANCE WRITE OFF POLICY
Approved August 28, 2012**

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to outline the procedures that will be used to write off ambulance receipts that have not been collected.

POLICY:

The policy of the Upton Fire – EMS Department and the Town of Upton is to collect all receivables generated by the Fire Department ambulance with the exception of cases where payment would create severe financial hardship. It is with this intent that the following billing policy guidelines are established.

APPLICABILITY

This is applicable to the receipt of fees charged for the provision of EMS services.

IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURE:

Background

The Town of Upton contracts with Coastal Medical Billing, Inc. (the billing company) to provide ambulance billing and collection for ambulance services provided by the Fire – EMS Department ambulance. The Town of Upton, as part of an agreement with the billing company, requires a standard method of pursuing collections that ensures payments are received that are owed to the Town, based on established rates set by the Town as allowed under federal or state medical reimbursement regulations.

Policies

1) The Town shall receive and review a monthly balance of accounts, including all aging and current accounts, provided by the billing company. The Town Manager and Fire Chief shall meet on a quarterly basis to reconcile outstanding balances, confirm receivables, review uncollected receivables that the billing company recommends to be written off, and review claims of financial hardship.

2) The Town of Upton shall meet with the billing company at least biannually, in January and June to discuss aging receivables that have had no activity within the prior 180 days. The process utilized by the billing company to pursue individual uncollected accounts shall be reviewed. The methods of collection that are considered to be fair and reasonable are: correspondence to the insurance company, the patient was insured for their medical transport, or if uninsured, documented phone calls, emails or fax transmissions to the patient or their insurance company. The final step will be to determine if the patient was reimbursed directly from their insurance company for their medical transport and has not reimbursed the Town.

3) The Town Manager, with the recommendation of the Fire Chief, after confirming that the above policy has been met, will make a determination that an account is to be written off as an uncollected account. This determination does not constitute forgiveness of the debt if at a future date payment is received by the billing company. The determination to write off an account shall be based upon the inability of the billing company, or any agents that they may use, to locate or obtain direct contact with a patient, either by registered letter or some other means. A list of uncollectable accounts that are determined to be written off shall be provided to the Board of Selectmen.

Collection Agency

If the patient has ignored all attempts for reconciliation of their account the billing company will enter the account onto a collection report. This report will be sent to the Town on a quarterly basis when it will be reviewed by the Fire Chief to determine if some or all accounts will go to the collection agency. The Fire Chief will return the report to Coastal and provide them with a list of which of the patient accounts will go to a collection agency.

Financial Hardship Requests

1) Requests for a waiver of a portion or all of an ambulance bill shall be submitted by the patient to the billing company; on the billing company's approved form for review and determination of financial conditions of the patient and ability to pay. The request may require documentation, such as hospital free confirmation, a letter from a third party such as a social worker, or a letter from the patient attesting to their hardship that has been signed under the pains and penalties of perjury.

2) The billing company will review all requests for waivers based upon financial hardship and shall issue a recommendation to the Fire Chief. The Chief will then review the recommendation from the billing company and make a recommendation to the Town Manager. The Town Manager will make the final determination on waivers or hardship requests.

3) The Fire Chief shall notify the billing company of the decision of the Town Manager relative to the request for a waiver or financial hardship within five (5) days so that it may be documented in the accounts receivable report issued by the billing company.

Note

All information received as a result of this policy, including patient name, address, medical condition or history, and financial information is protected and may not be used as public record. Patient information is subject to compliance with federal, state, and local regulations relative to medical, personal and financial information for purposes of records retention and public record access.

REGULATORY / STATUTORYS REFERENCES:

List the sources if applicable upon which the policy is based, including related policies or procedures, guidelines, Town Bylaws, State or Federal laws.

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APPROVED BY:

Board of Selectmen, Chair: Kenneth E. Picard

Board of Selectmen: James A. Brochu

Board of Selectmen: Robert J. Fleming

Original date: August 28, 2012

Revised dates: